



ANNUAL REPORT

OFFICE OF GOVERNANCE

GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE

APRIL 2006 - MARCH 2007

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DIRECTOR

Strategic Direction

Belize Public Service

May 2007

Vision Statement

▲ Public Service that is customer focused, inspiring unity and confidence in its quest for national development

Mission Statement

To provide quality and efficient public services which create an enabling environment that contributes to the economic, social and cultural development of Belize for the welfare of all

Values

***Integrity *Equity *Accountability *Efficiency
*Professionalism *Transparency**

Strategic Direction

Office of Governance

MISSION STATEMENT

To promote and coordinate public sector modernization initiatives and good governance practices that will strengthen professionalism in the Public Service and improve service delivery to the general public

VISION STATEMENT

To be the LEADING catalyst in influencing and facilitating a competent and professional Public Service that is responsive to the needs of stakeholders through effective and efficient service delivery

SHARED VALUES

***Professionalism *Accountability *Integrity**
***Teamwork *Transparency *Responsiveness *Mutual**
Respect *Fairness *Inclusiveness

Vision statement

Electronic Government Policy Belize Public Service

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by the Public Service of Belize to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery using modern and standardized Electronic Government (e-government) practices and processes

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Under the theme “Putting People First—Achieving More with Less”, the Office of Governance has completed a first financial year in successfully implementing its strategy. This year also saw a closer alliance with donor and partner agencies, both regionally and internationally; as well as informal joined-up government with a few government agencies and individual managers of the Public Service.

My gratitude goes to all partners and donors who promoted or assisted in the Office’s many endeavours to improve governance and service delivery. To a large extent, the gratitude is extended particularly to the following agencies: Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), the Republic Of China (Taiwan), UNDP and UNICEF in Belize, and the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Many thanks to individuals in Belize, Chief Executive Officers Ms Marian McNab and Ms Anita Zetina for continuous support and contributions throughout the year. I recognize Mr. Aniki Palacio of the Labour Department a major contributor to the development of the Manual for the Performance Management and Appraisal System.

I acknowledge and thank Staff Members of the Office of Governance, a small but dynamic and effective group, for their commitment to service and in understanding the need for change.

Lastly, mucho appreciation to the Minister for the Public Service, the Rt. Hon. Said Musa, Prime Minister of Belize for continuing to provide the enabling atmosphere to improve service delivery.

*Myrtle Palacio
Director*

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Office of Governance

In furthering its goal to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service management, public sector modernization and good governance initiatives, the Government of Belize established the Office of Governance in September/October 2005. The Office falls under the portfolio of the Prime Minister as the Minister for the Public Service, and is managed by a Director.

The Office of Governance is an amalgam of two government agencies, namely, the Governance Unit from the Ministry of National Development, and the Public Sector Reform and Human Resource Management and Development from the now defunct Ministry of the Public Service. In addition a new business of government, that of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Electronic Government (E-government), was later included under the purview of the Office of Governance. Since December 2006, oversight to the Elections and Boundaries Department for administrative and financial management was added to the responsibilities of the Office of Governance.

The mandate for the Office of Governance emanated from the communiqué dated October 11, 2005 issued under the directives of the Minister for the Public Service, as empowered under Sec. 106 (3) of the Belize Constitution. The mandate reads as follows:

- Lead and coordinate good governance and public sector reform initiatives
- Monitor and evaluate human resource management
- Provide leadership and oversight of public sector management
- Create and manage a Training Institute for Public Sector Development offering programmes to ensure that needed competences are available

The desire to promote effective and accountable management has been the precursor to the Office's agenda for the Belize Public Service. In advancing such, good governance continued to be the guiding principle utilized in all undertakings, to revitalize and transform the delivery of services to the Belizean public. Under the theme *“Putting People First—Achieving More with Less”*, the Office of Governance as the *leading catalyst* for change embarked on a series of initiatives, including:

- Conducting in earnest public sector administration and managerial capacity building efforts
- Building awareness to governance and the machinery of government

- Supporting tools such as e-government to sustain public administration reform

The Office itself is a reform/modernization endeavour. Whereby, once the functions for governance initiatives, modernization and public sector management were under separate managements and institutions of government; this new structure, the Office of Governance embraces all three abovementioned businesses of government under one management. According to Charles Polidano, Institute of Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester, in his publication “Why Civil Service Reform Fail”, that failure is not so much due to the content (what initiatives) of reform, as with the approach (how). One advantage in this new governance framework is the ease of offering more direction to drive governance and modernization initiatives forward.

Amidst the pressures for higher quality services, advances in information technology, the media and electronic communications, the government of Belize must constantly examine its business processes with a view to improve service delivery. The Office of Governance was placed at the heart of this dynamism. However, coming at the heels of relatively “better” capacitated efforts at modernization and good governance initiatives, the mantra for this financial year was “*Achieving More with Less*”. The Office is of the view that “*Putting People First*” is key to improving the Public Service, and hence its emphasis on the human capital and the customer. While the former will always be on-going, the latter term “*Customer*” is still relatively a new concept to the Public Service.

1.2 Content and Scope of the Report

March 31st 2007 marked 18 months of operation and the first full financial year in carrying out the mandate of the Office of Governance. While this is the second report on the stewardship of the Office, this Annual Report 2006/2007 also represents the Office’s first full year of reporting on its activities. The first report, “End of Year 2005/2006”, documented the Office’s accomplishments since its inception October 2005, to the end of the financial year March 31, 2006; a total of six months. The End of Year Report 2005/2006 is available on the Government of Belize Website www.governmentofbelize.gov.bz .

This Annual Report elucidates the stewardship of the Office during its first full financial year of activities, 2006/2007. Guided by the Office’s road map, this Annual Report demonstrates the

successful implementation of the Plan—the celebration of the International Public Service Day, the many efforts at capacity building and human capital development, and the call for efficiency in accessing government information by the Public through Information Communication Technology (ICT). The Annual Report 2006/2007 also highlights the contribution of Partners and the positive outcomes from such networking. It brings awareness to the many challenges and the successes achieved from facing these challenges. Lastly, it reports on the cost of implementing the activities, both real and opportunity costs.

1.3 Strategic Direction

As a new Office with a multiplicity of responsibilities, it was imperative to develop an interim two-year strategy to handle the diverse issues in a more systematic and strategic manner. This Strategic Plan with the accompanying Operational Plan was implemented at the start of the new financial year, in April 2006.

Some 16 stakeholders were identified whose needs and expectations for planning purposes, were a crucial part of the basis upon which the strategy was developed. The stakeholder analysis lists the stakeholders in alphabetical order, and summarizes the stakeholders' expectations and interests in the Office. The priority ranging from L (Low) to H (High) is based on the stakeholders' potential impact on the Office. High Priority stakeholders are those whom if the Office fails to address their interests or expectations, the Office will fail completely to achieve its goals and mission. Medium Priority stakeholders are those stakeholders whom if the Office fails to address their interests or expectations, will result in significant limitation in the extent to which the Office of Governance achieves its goals and mission. Of Low Priority are those stakeholders whom if the Office fails to address their expectations or interests will result in minimal impact on the extent to which the Office of Governance achieves its goals and mission. A summary of the stakeholder analysis follows.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS SUMMARY

	Stakeholder	Expectations/ Interest	Priority
1	Advisory Bodies	Timely and reliable reports are provided	M
2	Church	Fairness and mutual respect is institutionalised in the public service	L
3	Education and Training Institutions	Effective training programs developed and operationalized	M
4	Executive (Cabinet)	All functions are carried out in a transparent manner	H
5	General Public	Continuous provision of quality and efficient service delivery in the public service	H
6	International Partners	Good governance principles are practiced	H
7	Judiciary	Adherence to the rule of law	L
8	Legislature	Good governance principles in the public service are practiced	M
9	Ministries/Departments	Policies to foster good governance principles are initiated and coordinator	H
10	Municipal Boards	Accountability, efficiency and transparency in the public service are promoted	L
11	NGO's/Civil Society	Accountability, efficiency and transparency in the public service are promoted	L
12	Office of Governance Staff	Respect, openness and team spirit are accorded	H
13	Politicians	Inclusiveness, accountability and quality service delivery in the public service are promoted	L
14	Private Sector	Accountability, transparency and efficiency in public administration are promoted	M
15	Public Officers	Professionalism and transparency in the public service are practiced	H
16	Trade Unions	Good industrial relations facilitated	M

The Office defined “governance” and “modernization” to be in line with its vision, mission, goals and the standards of its regional and international partners. The Vision and Mission statements and Shared Values for the Office follow.

Vision

*To be the **leading** catalyst in influencing professional public service that is responsive to the need of stakeholders through effective and efficient service delivery*

Mission

To promote and coordinate public sector modernization initiatives and good governance practices that will strengthen professionalism in the public service and improve service delivery to the general public

Shared Values

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| * Professionalism | * Transparency |
| * Accountability | * Responsiveness |
| * Integrity | * Mutual Respect |
| * <i>Teamwork</i> | * <i>Fairness & Inclusiveness</i> |

In order to achieve its vision, the Office concentrated on three Key Result Areas (KRAs) which are critical make or break areas in which results must be achieved. Further a SWOT Analysis on each KRA was conducted in order to identify the organization’s internal **strengths** and weaknesses, as well as, **opportunities** and **threats/challenges** in the external environment which impact upon its work.

The KRAs are initiatives in:

- ICT and E-government
- Human Capital Management & Development
- Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization

Goal setting was viewed as crucial for the success of the Office which is operating in an environment of constant changes and challenges. Therefore four strategic goals were set for each KRA listed above. The strategic goals are the Offices' general statements of intended outcomes, or what the Office intends to achieve, while the performance indicators enable the Office to measure its performance in a concrete and objective manner.

The Annual Work Plan for each Unit of the Office is developed from the Strategic Plan. Subsequently, the Monthly Plan for each Unit is a reflection of the Annual Work Plan. This provides a clear road map for staff members of the Office, as well as, the stakeholders it reports to.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2.1 Staffing

Two new positions were added during the financial year making the total number of staff personnel ten, inclusive of three support staff members. The governance framework is departmentalized by function and there are four Units. Three Units respond to the main businesses or Key Result Areas of the Office, while the fourth has responsibility for general administration, including records and financial management. The staff list as at March 2007, is demonstrated in the next table, and represents staff members at the end of the financial year in alphabetical order.

Staff List as at March 2007

No.	Names	Present Posting	Substantive Post
1.	Azucena Castillo	Secretary I	Secretary I
2.	Tracy Gillett	First Class Clerk	First Class Clerk
3.	Jacqueline Joseph	(Ag.) Coordinator, Human Resource Management/Development	Finance Officer III
4.	Michelle Longsworth	Head, ICT/E-government	Head, ICT/e-Government
5.	Nuridim Mariano	Driver/Office Assistant	Driver/Office Assistant
6.	Ruth Meighan	Head, Governance & Modernization (Ag.)	Administrative Officer I
7.	Raymond Morris	Head, Human Resource Management/Development	Administrative Officer I
8.	Myrtle Palacio	Director	Director
9.	Diana Price-Murillo	Administrative Officer III	Administrative Officer III
10.	Sherlet Thurton	Information Systems Administrator (Ag.)	Registering Officer

The main challenge with a flat organization structure such as the Office of Governance is the capacity or skill of its staff. For example, prior to September 2005 Governance and Modernization were two separate Units each staffed by two or more senior-level Officers. Presently, Governance and Modernization initiatives are combined as one Unit, staffed by one person only, and the other three Units each staffed by two persons. The Officers in this new governance framework have to be highly skilled, including the capacity to multi-task.

Some positions were regularized during the financial year as was recommended in the End of Year Report 2006. The Computer Programmer post was upgraded to Head ICT/e-Government, and the Head Governance and Modernization Unit recognized as a post. The Director International Affairs was moved to perform in that substantive post after some three years of posting outside of the substantive Ministry. Ms. Azucena Castillo, Secretary I and Ms. Tracy Gillett, First Class Clerk replaced Mrs. Daisy Brown Neal and Ms. Aeshia McFadzean, respectively. Two welcomed additions were Mrs. Jacqueline Joseph and Ms. Sherlet Thurton. Both persons are on probation prior to appointment to the posts.

Besides a six weeks stint in November/December 2006, the Governance and Modernization Unit was left without staffing for approximately six months, from May 2006 until February 2007. Similarly, posts in the ICT and E-government Unit were not filled for two months from June until August. These are examples of some of the challenges faced by the Office of Governance in its quest for good governance principles and championing the way forward for a “competent and professional Public service that is responsive to the needs of stakeholders through effective and efficient service delivery”. During such occurrences other staff members, including the Director doubled and tripled work-loads to maintain productivity in accordance with the road map.

2.2 Staff Meetings and Professional Development Training

Staff meetings are held on a regular basis, an average of twice monthly. In addition one-on-one staff engagements and small (like) group consultations are conducted frequently. Staff meetings and one-on-one engagements with staff are effective tools employed to share information and obtain immediate feedback which is essential for staff evaluation and management decisions.

The meetings are necessary to ensure that the Office’s vision and mission are clearly understood and employed. The meetings are also used to continuously bring awareness to the functions of a *new*

Office and to attain consensus on efforts that may impinge or impact on the goals of the Office of Governance. Initiative is encouraged and applauded by placing such on the agendas for the meetings and by implementing those that are relevant to the objectives of the Office.

On February 15, 2007 a Management Team Meeting was held to include the Elections and Boundaries Department (EBD) as part of the “Team”. Three other formal meetings were held with the Acting Chief Elections Officer to follow through on the recommendations from the Management Team meeting held in February.

On October 3, 2006 a one-day session was held at Clarissa Falls in the Cayo District aimed at bringing awareness to the roles of the two Human Resource Offices in the Public Service, and the laws pertaining to the Public Service. The main facilitator was Mr. Justin Palacio, Director, Office of the Services Commission.

2.3 Communication

Communication is still a challenge when dealing with the wider Public Service. The Office has had to employ multiple communication methods when engaging government agencies. This method has proven to be very time consuming and labour intensive.

The Office is presently developing a communication strategy, including the use of ICT to break down the existing silos. This is crucial to good governance. E-government through ICT will be utilized to facilitate efficiency and hence improve on the communication efforts.

3. PARTNERSHIPS AND DONOR SUPPORT

The overarching theme of “*Putting People First—Achieving More with Less*” was incorporated into the Annual Plan for the financial year 2006/2007. One way of achieving this was to network, form partnerships and alliances, to learn about best practices from experts so as not to duplicate efforts; as well as involving the assistance of technical expertise. To further garner support, the Office engaged national and international partners, including informal relationships with other Public Service agencies in joined-up government endeavours. The following are excerpts of the involvement of some partners, including donor support to the Office of Governance.

3.1 Commonwealth Debt Initiative (CDI) Fund

By accessing Commonwealth Debt Initiatives (CDI) Fund through the Ministry of National Development, the Office was able to expand its capacity building endeavours, directly aimed at improving Public Service management for better governance. Firstly, a cadre of senior Public Officers received hands-on training in Organization Review, facilitated by Mr. Victor Poyotte, a consultant from Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD). This group conducted comprehensive organization reviews of several organizations including the review process for three oversight agencies, namely, the Ombudsman, Integrity Commission and Contractor General. The Report was given wide consultation including the offices of the three oversight agencies and the Cabinet. The report is posted on the government Website Portal www.governmentofbelize.gov.bz for access to the wider public.

Secondly, the new Performance Management and Appraisal System (PMAS) was implemented in October 2007. Country wide training was afforded to Public Officers in the use of the Forms and the conduct of interviews prior to the implementation of the new PMAS. Approximately 12,000 evaluation forms and manuals were printed and disseminated to all Ministries and Departments for further availability to staff. Approximately 700 Public Officers countrywide were engaged in the initial training through a cadre of trained trainers. The training is on-going and the Manual with the accompanying Forms are available on the government Website Portal listed above.

Lastly, two other areas that the CDI Fund assisted the Office of Governance in achieving its goals of improved Public Sector effectiveness and efficiency are: the Governance Awareness Tour”, particularly for purchases from small vendors in each district town where the Tour was conducted; and some of the activities involved in the development of the government Website Portal.

Funds received from the Ministry of National Development during this financial year 2006/2007 totaled **\$85,079.95**. However, funds utilized for the abovementioned activities during this financial year amounted to **\$73,306.94**. The difference of **\$11,773.01** remained in the Consolidated Funds at the end of the financial year. The Office of Governance submitted a financial statement with accompanying supporting documents to the Ministry of National Development.

3.2 UNDP/UNICEF

The partnership with the two United Nations (UN) organizations UNDP and UNICEF assisted the Office to successfully implement areas of its Strategic Plan that are in line with the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The focus was therefore on two very important themes, namely, public sector performance enhancement, and good governance mechanisms and practices.

Entitled “*Capacity Building for Improved Public Sector Performance*”, the project with UNDP and UNICEF offered to senior and middle level Public Officers, five three-day workshops and three two-day training of trainers’ seminars. A first of its kind Governance Awareness Tour was conducted through seven workshops, one in each district town with the exception of San Pedro, and in the City of Belmopan. The Professional Writing workshop was facilitated locally and the other five subject areas by consultants from CARICAD. The topics for the workshops are listed as follows.

- Evidence-based Policy Development and Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- Results-based Performance Management
- Organization Review
- Professional Writing
- Governance Awareness

The project outcome in terms of the number of Officers and others who benefited by participating in the “Capacity Building” project totaled **335**, as indicated below. Although 175 participants were targeted for the skills development and training of trainers, the 186 participants who actually attended exceeded the target number by 11. Some workshops fell below target and others exceeded target, which was 25 for the skills development and 15 for training of trainers.

<i>Performance Enhancement through soft skills development</i>	150
<i>Training of Trainers for sustainability</i>	36
<i>Governance Awareness</i>	149

The initial budget for the project totaled US \$65,914.00, divided as follows: US \$23,576.00 from UNICEF and US \$42,338.00 from UNDP. However the actual cost to the UN partners was: **Bze. \$39,348 or US \$19,674** to UNICEF and **Bze. \$60,038 or US \$30,019** to UNDP. Therefore the total actual contribution to the project by both UN Agencies was **Bze. \$99,386**. The Government of

Belize supported with opportunity costs of salaries and subsistence as well as some actual cost in paying the small vendors on the Governance Awareness Tour through the CDI Fund. The project commenced on September 1, 2006 and ended on March 31, 2007.

3.3 Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD)

The Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) is a regional organization whose focus includes the influencing of professional standards and promoting quality service delivery in Public Services in the region. As such, CARICAD is responsible for assisting member governments to improve efficiency and to contribute to the strengthening of public sector capacity in the CARICOM region. CARICAD's core products and services include documentation of best practices, change management training, e-government facilitation and organizational and policy development.

CARICAD has been extremely supportive of the work of the Office of Governance, from its inception in November 2005. CARICAD accommodated the Office with technical expertise to immediately develop an interim two-year Strategic Plan, and implement the much needed human capital development plan. While there was no direct financial input, the services, support and prompt responses accessed by the Office from CARICAD in this financial year, were indeed exceedingly invaluable.

3.4 The Commonwealth Secretariat (GIDD)

The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) operates as part of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC). Its purpose is to strengthen good governance in member countries of the Commonwealth by providing advice, training and expertise to build capacity in institutions throughout the Commonwealth. The GIDD has contributed significantly to human resource development and the enhancement of good governance practices in the Belize Public Service.

Belize continues to be supported in improving its e-government efforts through the Commonwealth Connects Programme. The processes of improving the government Website Portal and the development of a National ICT Policy for Belize have started. Commonwealth Connects is a multi-stakeholder partnership aimed at facilitating strategic action by governments, the private sector and civil society organizations in the transfer of technology and expertise across the Commonwealth. The Programme

through its various activities is bridging the digital divide by providing digital opportunities across the Commonwealth. It focuses on five areas as follows:

- Building policy and regulatory capacity
- Modernizing education and skills
- Entrepreneurship for poverty reduction
- Promoting local access to connectivity
- Regional networking, local content and knowledge

During this financial year 2006/2007 some six Public Officers were fully funded to participate in various developmental workshops, and one to a Point of Contact meeting in Malta. Two of the workshops were held in Singapore, one in Barbados and three in London; and the titles for the workshops are as follows:

- Combating Corruption in the Delivery of Infrastructure Services
- Managing Public Sector Human Resources
- Commonwealth Advanced Seminar for Internal Auditors
- Governance and Policy Development
- Developing E-government and E-business Strategies
- Building Partnerships for Quality Public Service Human Resource Development and Training Delivery within CARICOM Member States

Lastly, a full Commonwealth scholarship was granted to a Public Officer to pursue a law degree in Oil and Gas Law at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland commencing in the September 2007 school year.

3.5 The Republic of China (Taiwan)

The Republic of China (Taiwan) through the previous and present Ambassadors to Belize continues to assist with the development of ICT and e-government and the promotion of its innovations in Belize. The Belize/Taiwan Innovations Show held at the House of Culture on September 12, 2006 demonstrated the many possibilities for Belize in utilizing ICT for development.

An Information Technology (IT) Training Center with 30 computers was established in October 2005, housed at the George Price Center for Development in Belmopan. This commenced a two-year project with the Government of Belize. Subsequently several seminars have been conducted,

and for this reporting period some **seventy-two** persons from the public, private and social sectors were awarded with certificates, while another **sixty three** participated in a one-day seminar on e-learning on September 12, 2006. During this reporting year one Public Officer received training in Taiwan on the topic “Bridging the Digital Divide”. This was funded by the International Cooperation and Development Fund.

3.6 The Organization of American States (OAS)

By funding the participation to a workshop on “Sharing E-experience” in Ottawa, Canada, the Organization of American States and the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA) catapulted the networking capabilities of the Office of Governance with expertise in E-government from the Latin American and CARICOM regions. The Office of Governance became an active member of RED GEALC, a network of e-government leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean; which offers direct access to innovations on-line. Two Public Officers were fully supported to attend workshops in Brazil and Grenada entitled, “Mostra de Solucoes Aplicadas AO Sector Publico Inovacoes Para UM Brasil Transparente”; and “Regional Telecommunications Network: Due Diligence Exercise”, respectively.

4. ADVISORY BODIES

4.1 Joint Staff Relations Council (JSRC)

The Joint Staff Relations Council (JSRC) comprises of ten members, five persons representing the Public Service Union, also referred to as Staff Side; and five others representing Public Service management termed the Official Side. A quorum constitutes six members of the Council, three from the Staff Side and three from the Official Side, and the Council has the power to regulate its own procedures and make rules to govern its meetings. Its Terms of Reference (TOR) or functions can be found on the government portal and includes:

a) securing the greatest measures of cooperation between the Government as employer and the representative body in matters affecting the public service with the primary view of increasing efficiency in the public service together with the well-being of public officers

b) providing mechanisms for dealing with grievances and generally to strive to produce solutions and ideas which may be beneficial for the public service by bringing together the experience and viewpoints of representatives of the various sectors of the public service

c) encouraging increased competence of public officers through training and development in administrative, professional and technical fields

d) recommending legislation concerning the position of public officers in relation to organization, office facilities, equipment and use of machinery

During this financial year, **seven** meetings were called and **five** actually took place. The other two were cancelled primarily due to not having enough numbers on the Staff Side required for a quorum. The Office of Governance as the Secretariat is the coordinating agency and provided secretarial and clerical services to the meetings.

Accomplishments for this financial year are as follows:

- Updated and ratified the TOR which was approved by the Minister for the Public Service as ratified by the JSRC
- Ratified the PMAS forms and Manuals which was approved by the Cabinet as ratified.
- Continuing the processes of developing criterion for promotion and advancement for the administrative, accounts, foreign service and secretarial grades
- Recognized the need for a legal framework for governance and supported the following activities
 - ✓ Developed objectives for a legal framework for governance for the Public Service
 - ✓ Developed a table of contents, content and scope for a legal framework for the Public Service
 - ✓ Developed a working draft for a Public Service Management Bill

4.2 Council on Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization

Good governance and public sector modernization remain significant to the mandate of the Government of Belize. For purposes of effectiveness and efficiency, there is one advisory body for governance and modernization called the Council on Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization (CGM). Launched in June 2006, the CGM advises the Minister for the Public Service and its Terms of Reference with the accompanying Code of Ethics can be accessed from the government portal www.governmentofbelize.gov.bz.

The ten members of the CGM are each recognized as leaders in their own right and do not particularly represent an organization. The combined expertise of the membership is wide, ranging from private and public sector management, financial management to unionism and social sector involvement.

Some of the responsibilities of the CGM are to:

1. Make recommendations on good governance initiatives aimed at bringing awareness to citizens on good governance principles
2. Provide guidance in the implementation of improvement initiatives in public sector administration
3. Serve as a forum for the interface between Government of Belize and social partners for the sharing of ideas and information arising from modernization and governance endeavours
4. Make recommendations on modernization initiatives aimed at improving service delivery

At the close of the 2006/2007 financial year, the CGM completed nine months in operation and its accomplishments are as follows:

- Developed a Code of Ethics
- Agreed to support the Office's Strategic Plan
- Recognized the need for a legal framework for governance and as a result supported the following activities
 - ✓ Developed objectives for a legal framework for governance for the Public Service
 - ✓ Developed a table of contents, content and scope for a legal framework for the Public Service
 - ✓ Developed a working draft for a Public Service Management Bill

The Council called six meetings and all six took place during the financial year 2006/2007. The Office of Governance as the Secretariat is the coordinating agency and provided secretarial and clerical services to the meetings.

4.3 Human Resource Development Council (HRDC)

The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) advises on policies and strategies relating to human resource development. The Council also acts as the national coordinating agency for external fellowship and training awards. It is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education, and there are seven other members, as follows:

- (a) Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Education
- (b) Director Office of Governance
- (c) President of the University of Belize
- (d) President of the Public Service Union
- (e) Director, Youth for the Future
- (f) Representative of the business community
- (g) Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- (h) Representative of the Ministry of Finance

The Council is responsible for:

- (a) advising the Minister on policy goals and strategies related to the training and development of human resources in the public service and to the overall development of the public service as it deems expedient
- (b) advising on Government's training needs and scholarship programmes
- (c) ensuring the development, implementation and monitoring of a human resource policy and strategy for the public service
- (d) acting as the national coordinating agency for specific external fellowship and training awards
- (e) acting as selection committee for external scholarship awards
- (f) forming membership of selection panel for merit awards as per the Merit Award Policy

The Council held two meetings during the financial year 2006/2007, and in addition has utilized e-government processes to communicate with members. The Office of Governance as the Secretariat is the coordinating agency and provided secretarial and clerical services to the meetings. Its accomplishments during this time period are:

- Assisted in the development of a Merit Award Policy

- Reviewed and rejected as inadequate a draft National Human Resources Policy developed by a consultant for the then Ministry of the Public Service in early 2005
- Sought and received legal advice from the Solicitor General's Office with regards to the abovementioned draft
- Supported the Office of Governance in its call for Awards of Excellence for 2007
- Responded to the Commonwealth Scholarship Awards—One of two Belizeans recommended by the Awards Committee was awarded a full scholarship starting September 2007
- Commenced the development of a Human Capital Development Policy for the Public Service

4.4 Electronic Government Effectiveness Task force (eGe) Task Force

The Electronic Government (eGe) Task Force was inaugurated in November 2006 to provide advice to the Office of Governance on matters pertaining to ICT and e-government effectiveness for the Government of Belize, and specifically to assist in the development of an e-Government Policy for the Public Service. The responsibilities of the eGe Task force include:

- Recommend new methods to communicate and coordinate access to government information.
- Assist in developing mechanisms for broad stakeholder engagement to support and embrace the development of ICT and e-government
- Assist in identifying issues relevant to ICT and e-government in the Public service

Some four meetings were held during the financial year, which were more in workshop formats as part of the involvement in the processes of developing the e-government Policy. The methodology was hands on facilitated by Dr. Cletus Bertin, a consultant recommended by CARICAD.

The primary accomplishment was assisting in the processes of developing the E-government Policy and the conduct of consultations on the Policy draft within the Public Service. The members collected data and developed a strategic direction for the Policy including goals and vision for E-government in the Public Service.

5. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

5.1 Human Capital Development

In order to provide efficient and quality services to the citizens, the Government of Belize continues to maintain its commitment to invest in the enhancement of the skills of its employees. The Office of Governance therefore adopted the wider standpoint of the “*human capital concept*”. The Office views people as assets whose value to the Government of Belize can be enhanced by investing in their development. This also supports the Office’s theme of “*Putting People First*”. The Office of Governance embraced various endeavours to develop a high performance skills base Public Service, so as to bring this to fruition. One such effort is the enhancement of soft skills that employees need to work effectively.

5.1.1 *Capacity Building for Improved Governance and Public Sector Performance (Capacity Building)*

The “Capacity Building” project was initiated to improve the performance levels of the Public Service by way of a targeted capacity building programme for middle and senior public officers. The aim was to increase the levels of technical knowledge and skills in six areas: *Results-based Performance Management, Evidence-based Policy Development and Analysis, Organization Review, Strategic Planning, Professional Report Writing and Customer Service*. The project also aimed at maintaining capacities and skills within the Public Service through a “Training of Trainers” component of the programme in *Evidence-based Policy Development, Strategic Planning, Results-based Performance Management and Customer Service*. Through the “Training of Trainers” effort, the technical capacity building programmes will be sustained and provided locally on a continuous basis.

The Capacity Building project was embraced not only by CARICAD but also UNDP and UNICEF. While CARICAD provided highly qualified, well skilled facilitators; UNICEF and UNDP, along with the Government of Belize (GOB) funded the workshops. The intervention of UNDP/UNICEF afforded the opportunity to broaden the number of participants. A total of **365** persons were trained in Methods & Principles, and **69** trained as Trainers. Five of the workshops were facilitated by Consultants from CARICAD, and one in Professional Writing, by Ms. Dianne Lindo, Director, Charles T. Hunter Commission for Social Outreach, St. John’s Landivar in Belize City.

Reliable evaluation of training activities has proven to be very difficult, and the questionnaires given to each participant immediately after each workshop are of limited value, as the responses reflect the immediate impressions of the participants. The success of these training sessions will be its long term impact on the various government agencies. It will therefore be dependent on top management's support in fostering the implementation of the training content in the day to day work.

The Office of Governance will measure the impact through various evaluation strategies, including the response to the present call to Ministries for Annual Reporting, Strategic Planning, the implementation of Management Teams, and the call for the development of a Customer Charter. The strategy is to gather information from a range of points of inquiry; whether trainees, supervisors, managers or the general public. For example, surveys on customer satisfaction will elicit indicators, such as, number of justified complaints or reverse administrative decisions.

5.1.2 International Workshops and Scholarships

The Office of Governance serves as the Point of Contact for processing external fellowships and training awards. The Commonwealth Scholarship was advertised in October 2006, with closing date of December 8, 2006. Some eleven persons applied and two were short listed as is required for further recommendation to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Expertise (CFTC), which is the final deciding body. The selection is based on the quality of the essays and the choice of majors, being important to Belize's development. The Selection Committee comprises members of the Human Resource Development Committee. Ms. Nichola Nadine Cho was offered the scholarship to pursue an LLM degree in Oil and Gas Law at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland commencing September 2007.

Belize participated in six workshops which were fully funded by the Governance and Institutional Development (GIDD), Commonwealth Secretariat. Participants were nominated by their various Ministries based on the mandate of the Ministry, and each participant was required to submit a report for information sharing to the Office of Governance. All reports were further shared with the Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, as is the policy of the Government of Belize. The following is a list of participants by the title of the workshop, date and venue.

1. **Mr. Justin Palacio**—"managing Public Sector Human Resources", May 15 – 26, 2006 in Singapore



ICT
IT Tra

PUTTING P



Skills Development Training



Governance Awareness



Training
Centre



PEOPLE FIRST



Longstanding
Service Award
25+ Years
June 2006



2. **Mrs. Myrtle Palacio**—”Governance and Policy Development”, July 10 – 18, 2006 in Antigua and Barbuda
3. **Mr. Cadet Henderson**—”Combating Corruption in the Delivery of Infrastructure Services”, September 11 – 15, 2006 in London
4. **Mr. Selwyn Fuller**—”Commonwealth Advanced Seminar for Internal Auditors”, October 9-13, 2006 in London
5. **Mr. Raymond Morris**—”Building Partnerships for Quality Public Service Human Resource Development and Training within CARICOM Member States”, March 7 – 10, 2007 in Barbados
6. **Mrs. Michelle Longworth**—”Developing E-government & E-business Strategies”, March 5 – 16 in Singapore

5.2 ICT and Electronic- government (E-government)

Electronic government aims to enhance access to and delivery of government services to benefit citizens. It also seeks to strengthen government’s drive toward effective governance and increased transparency to better manage a country’s social and economic resources for development.

According to the E-government Policy for the Belize Public Service, the definitions of e-government range from “the use of information technology to free movement of information to overcome the physical bounds of traditional paper and physical based systems”, to “the use of technology to enhance the access to and delivery of government services to benefit citizens, business partners and employees.” The common theme behind these definitions is that e-government involves the automation or computerization of existing paper-based procedures that will prompt new styles of leadership, new ways of debating and deciding strategies, new ways of transacting business, new ways of listening to citizens and communities, and new ways of organizing and delivering information.

5.2.1 *Electronic Government (E-government) Policy and Strategy Framework*

Utilizing an evidenced-based policy formulation approach, data was collected and analyzed with respect to ongoing and planned ICT initiatives in the Public Sector. Given the present level of adoption and use of computer technology, the E-Government Policy will augur well for the further advancement of the public sector modernization agenda.

The objectives of the E-Government Policy will be pursued over the short term (0-2 years), medium term (0-5 years, and long term (0-15 years), in the context of the following vision: *the use of information and communication technology (ICT) by the Public Service of Belize to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery using modern and standardized Electronic Government practices and processes.* The Policy will seek to promote the adoption of ISO standards as national standards for acceptable use and behavior with respect to information and technology resources in the public sector, including copyrighted material, network security, hacking attempts, data, hardware, software and email are also outlined in this Policy.

The methodology for developing the E-government Policy was hands-on, with the facilitator Dr. Cletus Bertin guiding members of the eGe Task Force and the Office of governance in the process. Implementation is on-going in line with the Strategy Framework.

5.2.2 Basic Skills Training in the Microsoft Suite

Two three-day workshops in intermediate Word and Spread Sheet were conducted commencing April 10 ad April 25, 2007 respectively. The venue was the IT Training Centre at the George Price Centre for Peace and Development in Belmopan. A total of **57** Secretaries and Clerks participated, and the training was facilitated by staff from the Office of Governance assisted by two members of the Belize Defence Force.

5.2.3 E-government Awareness

Between May 16 and May 18, 2006 four workshops on Electronic Government Awareness were organized by the Office and funded by CARICAD. The facilitator Dr. Cletus Bertin, Consultant from CARICAD focused on the general theme of “E-government and Public Sector Modernization” to highlight the definitions, dimensions and benefits of e-Government. Discussions also included the need for policy formulation, institutional and human resource considerations.

The four workshops targeted four groups of senior Public Officers, namely, Heads of Department, Senior Public Officers, Chief Executive Officers, Information Technology (IT) and Technical Personnel. A total of **97** participated in all four workshops.

5.2.4 Training by Partners—The Republic of China (Taiwan) **Local Training**

The Republic of China (Taiwan) continued its support to the Government of Belize in Information Technology (IT) and E-government training initiatives, with the two-year project which commenced in October 2005. Four workshops and seminars were conducted during this reporting period, facilitated by professors from National YUNLIN University, Taiwan. The target groups included persons representing the private and social sectors as well as the public sector. Commencing on August 21, 2006 the workshops/seminars concluded on Sept 12, 2006 with a second seminar on Electronic Learning. Some **72** persons participated in the workshops and **63** persons in the seminar. The workshop topics are as follows:

<i>Web Design</i>	<i>E-business/E-commerce</i>
<i>E-learning I</i>	<i>E-learning II</i>

5.2.5 International Training

One Public Officer participated in a two-week workshop entitled “Bridging the Digital Divide”, which took place in Taipei, Taiwan. Ms Farnaz Rabbani represented the Office of Governance at this workshop held March 22 to April 4, 2006.

5.2.6 Awareness on the Procedures for a National ICT Policy

On February 2, 2007 a formal consultation was held at the Radisson Fort George in Belize City to apprise partners on the need for a National ICT Policy as well as the processes involved. Thirty eight (**38**) persons from the Private, Public and Social Sectors attended and participated. Discussions included the evolving of the GOB Website Portal from searching by a Ministry format, to one of searching by Services offered by Government. Three examples of Website Portal formats were introduced to familiarize participants. The conduct of a benchmarking exercise and e-readiness survey as part of the processes of developing the National ICT Policy were also discussed. The results of this survey and the benchmarking of Belize with four or five other countries will be discussed with Partners as soon as these come to fruition. Facilitators for the consultation were Mr. Devindra Ramnarine, Advisor, Public Sector Informatics, Governance and Institutional Development (GIDD), Commonwealth Secretariat; and Mr. David Little of Public Sector Transformation Group (PSTG) Consulting. Their participation at this level was fully funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

5.3 Governance and Modernization

Good governance and public sector modernization remain significant to the mandate of the Government of Belize. A working definition for “governance” and “modernization” was developed and disseminated and is being utilized as a measuring tool for monitoring and evaluation strategies, and as criteria for the Awards of Excellence. The definitions are as follows:

GOVERNANCE is the competent management of resources and business in a manner that is transparent, accountable and responsive.

REFORM/MODERNIZATION is the improvement of performance standards and service delivery through updating, rejuvenating, transforming PEOPLE and SYSTEMS.

5.3.1 Council on Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization

There is one advisory body for governance and public sector modernization, for purposes of effectiveness and efficiency. The Council on Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization (CGM) was inaugurated in June 2007. There are ten members including the Chairman. Each member is considered a leader in his/her own right and do not necessarily represent an organization. Some of the responsibilities of the CGM are to:

1. Make recommendations on good governance initiatives aimed at bringing awareness to Citizens on good governance principles
2. Provide guidance in the implementation of improvement initiatives in public sector administration
3. Serve as a forum for the interface between Government of Belize and social partners for the sharing of ideas and information arising from modernization and governance endeavours
4. Make recommendations on modernization initiatives aimed at improving service delivery

5.3.2 Organization Review of Oversight Agencies—Ombudsman, Contractor General, Integrity Commission

This organization review recognizes the importance of good governance principles and institutional strengthening in the modernization of the Public Service. The objectives of the review were: to

determine the extent to which the three Oversight Agencies were achieving their legislative mandate; and to provide a better understanding on the responsibilities, efficiency and effectiveness of these important oversight agencies as it relates to the discharge of their functions.

A draft report was completed in consultation with the staff and board members of the Oversight Agencies. The final report was presented to the Cabinet and a copy shared with the three organizations. A copy of the report can be found on the government's Website Portal www.governmentofbelize.gov.bz

5.3.3 Governance Awareness Tours

The "Governance Awareness Tours" focused on engaging the citizenry in bringing awareness to good governance principles and ensuring access to government. Seven workshops were conducted in each district town and the City of Belmopan between January and February 2007, facilitated by CARICAD. The workshops were partly funded by UNDP/UNICEF as part of the project, "Capacity Building for Improved Governance and Public Sector Performance". Some **149** persons participated countrywide and were engaged in the discussion on topics such as: *What is Governance? Who is Responsible? Framework for Governance and How do we ensure Good Governance*. This was in form of countrywide open-door forums whose general objectives embraced, building stakeholder capacity in the concept of good governance principles; and raising awareness for broader meaningful participation. The "Governance Awareness Tours" also demonstrated the Government's ability to initiate such a discussion with its citizens.

5.3.4 The GOB Website Portal www.governmentofbelize.gov.bz

The Government of Belize (GOB) Website Portal represents a gateway for information on government's services, and is a single coordinated approach to access government information. Launched in November, 2006, the GOB Website Portal boasts the latest technology, such as, streaming video and intranet. Each agency of Government has a page on the Website Portal with the same format for ease of use. The Website Portal provides accurate and current data on Government's businesses, policies, initiatives, news and laws of Belize. In addition, the GOB Website Portal includes an overview of Belize's history, geography and culture, as well as a directory for and profile of all Government Agencies.

The energies to bring this project to fruition resulted on the most part from a public-private sector partnership between Netkom Ltd. of Belize City and the Office of Governance. A Policy on the use of the Website Portal was developed and disseminated, and plans are underway to identify Point of Contacts in each Ministry and Department. Training will be organized for all Point of Contacts.

5.3.5 *Data Base of Non-State Stakeholders in Belize*

A consultant improved on a data base of non-state stakeholders that was originally gathered by staff of the Office of Governance. Funding for the consultancy was provided by UNDP. A total of 182 organizations are listed. Information was gathered from existing data published by the ANDA Directory and a list of Non Government Organizations that are registered with the Ministry of Human Development as required by the law. More non-state organizations were added to the list using the snowball methodology of data gathering. The data base is used as a contact list by the Office of Governance from time to time, and the findings garnered from this experience is that a large percentage of these organizations are inactive or are doing so on an ad hoc basis.

5.3.6 *Video Conferencing Project*

In order to bridge the physical distances between its fifteen member states, CARICOM sought funding for a Video Conferencing Project. The project is designed to provide voice and image communication simultaneously, in more than one geographical location. Belize was identified as one of six pilot sites and the Office of governance was charged with its implementation. George Price Centre for Peace in the City of Belmopan was identified as the ideal physical location and the equipment which arrived in July was installed at the Centre with the permission of the Board.

The Video Conferencing Project was launched on the morning of August 1, 2006 by Hon John Briceno, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and the Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Dr Edwin Carrington. Two training sessions were conducted by the experts from CARICOM on July 31, 2006 for technical persons from the Public Service and staff of George Price Center; and on August 1, 2006 for the end users of the equipment.

5.3.7 *International Public Service Day 2006*

On June 23, 2006, Belize joined other United Nations' (UN) countries for the first time, in publicly celebrating Public service Day. The theme for the celebrations was, "***Belize Public Service Day:***

Showcasing Our Worth, Valuing Our Officers". This day, June 23, was declared in 2003 as a day to honour and reflect on the work of Public Officers. Through the efforts of a National Committee and spearheaded by the Office of Governance, other persons were co-opted in volunteering their time to organize the day. As a result of the harmonization of efforts and networking, strong partnerships were built with the Office of Governance. The event was financed by the combined cooperation of some Ministries (Public Sector), and donations by the Private and Social Sectors for: banners, food, certificates and pins, transportation and advertisements.

Each District Town organized its own celebration activities, which included: exhibitions, free health screening, archival display on the Public Service, parades, and participation in Talk Shows. An Award Ceremony was held in the City of Belmopan to recognize long deserving Public Officers who have served for twenty five years or more. A total of **371** Public Officers were so awarded, and each Officer was presented with a certificate and a commemorative pin by the Governor General and the Prime Minister. It was an historical event for the Belize Public Service, as it was the first time that Officers were publicly recognized for their work and worth.

5.4 Human Capital Management

5.4.1 Merit Award Policy

The Belize Public Service is committed to recognizing and valuing Public Officers by awarding excellence in work performance and initiative. A Merit Award in a system of meritocracy is one in which advancement is based on achievement and ability. The Merit Award Programme is intended to reward outstanding performance in an Officer's particular job function or outstanding accomplishments that further the mission of the Ministry and/or Department. The Merit Award Programme will ensure that all deserving Public Officers are acknowledged in a manner that is transparent.

The Policy recognizes three types of awards, namely, the Public Officer of the year, the Public Service Agency of the Year and the Increment. The Policy is clear as to the criteria and conditions for each type of award, and procedures for the granting of the awards. The objectives of the Merit Award Programme are to:

- Encourage exceptional performance
- Reward initiatives/ideas/creativity of an individual Officer or Group that result in the further development of the Ministry and Department
- Reward sustained good governance practices in Ministries and Departments

The call for the Awards of Excellence for a Public Officer of the Year and the Public Agency of the Year for 2007 was circulated by the Office of Governance in February 2007. The selection process will commence in the next financial year.

5.4.2 *Legal Framework for Governance*

The Government of Belize has pledged its commitment to a twenty-year Strategic Plan and has identified priority areas for direction and focus such as health, education and the elimination of poverty. The successful attainment of these and other commitments is dependent on competent management. The intent of the framework is to continue to deliver better government through a call for the provision of a legal structure or framework for the management of the Public Service. A structure that defines and formalizes:

- All management roles and responsibilities for managers such as, Chief Executive Officers, other Senior Public Officers and the Unions
- The general management of the Public Service
- Utilize the strict view of Section 131 of the Constitution for inclusivity

The goal is the establishment of a Public Service Management Bill with some of the following objectives: to define the functions and responsibilities of agencies and managers of the Belize Public Service; to provide for the recognition of various categories of workers within the Public Service; to provide for the establishment of corporate planning; and to maintain an effective public service by providing for a Performance Management and Appraisal System.

The first draft of the Public Service Management Bill was completed and circulated to members of the Council on Good Governance & Public Sector Management (CGM) and Joint Staff Relations Council (JSRC). This legal framework is the initiative of both the Council on Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization and Joint Staff Relations Council.

5.4.3 Performance Management and Appraisal System (PMAS)

The Performance Management and Appraisal System (PMAS) for the Public Service is a tool to enhance the prevailing culture to one that is more committed to providing service to the public in a manner that is user friendly, and delivered with professionalism and integrity, to the benefit of the wider society. The PMAS seeks to maintain a transparent and rational basis for rewarding high-level performance and applying corrective measures for mediocre and unsatisfactory service.

The primary goal is to encourage the highest level of performance of the individual employee based on job knowledge, experience, academic training and skills. Through intervention, it endeavours to improve the skills of the employees to assist in the growth and fulfilment of the potential of each employee. Therefore, for the successful operation of the process, conscientious application by all participants is an essential ingredient.

For the first time there are separate appraisal forms for **Support Staff** and **Senior Staff**. One of the primary differences between the two groups being, sections on management themes for Senior Staff. There are two types of Performance Appraisal Forms for **Support Staff** – Mid-Year, and End-of-Year. There are also two types Performance Appraisal Forms for **Senior Staff** – Mid-Year and End-of-Year. The Mid Year Form is used at the formal evaluation at the end of the first six months, which starts with the employee's entry month. The End-Of-Year form is used at the end of the second six-month period or the end of the working year for the employee.

Initial training was conducted countrywide by trained trainers between July and November 2006 and the PMAS was implemented on October 1, 2006 for all employees except those under section 107 of the Constitution. Approximately 700 persons were trained, and training continues to be on-going.

5.4.4 Strategic Plan for the Office of Governance

The Strategic Plan and its accompanying Operational Plan seeks to chart the way forward as the Office of Governance leads the pathway in the transformation to a more professional Public Service that will provide to stakeholders, efficient and effective delivery of services. The substance of the Plan has three sections as follows.

First is an analysis of the various stakeholders who have an interest and expectations for such service delivery. It articulates these expectations and provides a ranking as to the level of priority, and which needs will be addressed first. The next section is a brief summary of the strategic direction to be taken. This includes, Vision and Mission Statements, and it also sets out the Values which are the principles that guide the work of the Office of Governance.

The third section is that of strategic focusing. This section provides a look at the concrete results that will flow from the strategies and actions taken. These are in the form of Key Results Areas (KRAs) such as Human Resource Development and Customer Service, which is followed by an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges under the various KRA headings.

The Strategic Plan was widely, circulated including a briefing session with CEO's to bring awareness to the Plan. It was also placed on the Website Portal for wider access to the general public. The Office of Governance has completed one year of implementing and evaluating this Plan.

5.4.5 Induction Training

Four one-day Induction Training workshops were conducted in Belize City and Belmopan. The training objective was to build human resource capacity to improve the understanding of government's operations, good governance principles, and participation by Public Officers in the service delivery processes. Targeted were relatively new entrants into the Public Service, those who entered within two years of the date of the call for the workshops. Several topics were discussed, including:

- Conditions of Service
- Governance and partnership for Quality
- Public Service Work Environment
- Central Government Structures and Processes
- Body of Rules and practices in Public Service Administration
- Role of the Public Service Union
- Ethical Leadership
- Public Service Financial Accountability and Reporting

The facilitator for the topic Ethical Leadership was Sister Caritas, while all other topics were facilitated by leaders from various areas of the Public Service. A total of **157** persons representing ten out of twelve Ministries attended as follows:

November 22, 2006	47
November 28, 2006	35
December 12, 2006	36
December 14, 2006	39

5.4.6 *Late Submissions of Social Security Claims*

The Government of Belize, through the Belize Social Security Scheme has been experiencing significant losses from the late submission of claims for employee's sickness benefits. This loss was identified with the Social Security's decision to enforce the timeframe for submission of benefits claims of 4 days, as is required under section 11 (1) of the Social Security Act (vide S.I. No. 81 of 1980).

A meeting of Finance Officers and Officers functioning as the human resource personnel was called by the Office of Governance. Mr. Derrick Morgan, Manager, Belmopan Branch, Social Security Board was present to bring awareness to the law, and the processes practiced by the Government of Belize. The outcome emanating from the discussion was that Ministries and Departments have not been submitting the social security claim forms (SM2 and MB1) on a timely manner as required by law. The existing practice in most instances was that claims were transmitted through the Ministry in a centralized system after the sick days have been utilized, which is oftentimes after the legislative requirement for submission of 4 days. This manner of organization response, geographical location and means of transmission did not facilitate the smooth processing and flow of documentation, such as:

- Some district branches are manned by one person
- The SM2 forms are only accessible at the ministry level
- Forms may not be duly and completely filled
- Claims are not given due priority
- Not all claims are made using the MB Form
- The engagement of postal service is not the most effective means

The abovementioned situation was not conducive to favourable processing and reimbursement of the Government of Belize for salaries paid out to employees during sickness or injury. The Office of Governance embarked on an extensive effort to reform this business practice. The way forward recommended by the meeting was that each government agency was to decentralize the process by submitting all claims to District Offices of the Social Security Board, and then subsequently submitting

copies to head Offices of the government agencies. A monitoring and evaluation strategy will be developed and implemented in the near future.

5.4.7 *Social Security Contributions of Public Officers*

A joint endeavour between Social Security Board and the Office of Governance on behalf of the Government of Belize was undertaken in February, 2006 commencing with a meeting by all partners to plan the way forward. Subsequently, the Social Security Board under the leadership of Ms Dalilah Castillo engaged and trained additional staff to assist with the efficient implementation of the Project.

Implementation commenced in September 2006 as planned, however it was found to be too time consuming. Subsequently, the Social Security Board undertook the development of a database software to improve on the efficiency of the data entry by the Government of Belize. This was installed by The Social Security Board's personnel at all relevant Ministries and Departments, and in some cases permission was sought of CITO to install these on equipment used on SMART Stream. The primary reason for this is that the Officers utilizing the SMART Stream are those who are invariable responsible for payroll and would directly be involved in gathering data on Officers' contributions. Ministries are therefore responsible to enter the data in the database and submit the information in electronic format, directly to the Social Security Board. The role of the Office of Governance is to facilitate the process between the Ministries and the Social Security Board.

5.4.8 *Organization Review Report—Immigration Department*

The Belize Immigration and Nationality Service is currently a Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Department was established by the Immigration and the Belizean Nationality Acts, Chapters 156 and 161 of the Laws of Belize respectively. The Acts charge the Government Minister responsible, not only for their administration and enforcement, but for any other laws relating to the immigration and naturalization of non-citizens. Authority is delegated to the Director, Immigration and Nationality Service to implement national policies introduced from time to time.

The Office of Governance with support from the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) initiated an organization review of the Department of Immigration and Nationality. This review forms part of the public sector reform and modernization initiative being implemented

by the Office of Governance. A team of eight (8) senior public officers including three (3) from the Department, worked along with a consultant identified by CARICAD to undertake the review exercise.

The main goal of the exercise was to undertake an institutional review of the Immigration Department as a pilot for subsequent reviews of other Public Service institutions in Belize. Another important objective of the review process was the training of a cadre of at least eight senior Public Officers to undertake subsequent organization reviews. Review activities on the Immigration Department were undertaken in two missions during the months of April and May 2006. To gather empirical data, the Consultant and the team studied documents made available by staff members of the Department, interviewed key stakeholder representatives and conducted site visits to Offices in Belize City, the Phillip Goldson International Airport, Orange Walk Town, Northern Border, City of Belmopan, and the Western Border.

A Report on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the organization review was presented to the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Director, Immigration and Nationality Service. A summary of the findings and recommendations is outlined in the report, along with full details on the findings under the following **ten** main headings:

1. *Legal and Policy Instruments*
2. *Oversight Responsibilities*
3. *Department Mandate*
4. *Institutional Framework*
5. *Department Structure*
6. *Department Services*
7. *Institutional Support*
8. *Department Coordination*
9. *Department Planning*
10. *Performance Management*

5.4.9 Improved Management in the Public Service

One of the weaknesses in the management of the Public Sector as outlined in the Management Audit Report of 2003 is the lack of strategic focus and direction, or lack of planning by Ministries. Strategic Planning was also identified by the Public Sector Reform Council, 2003-2005 as one concern that needed to be addressed. In addition, one major important characteristic of the newly reinstated Performance Management Appraisal System (PMAS) requires that all Ministries maintain Strategic and Operational Plans, complete with goals and objectives. The success of the Performance Management Appraisal System (PMAS) will impact on the efficiency and moral of the Public Service.

Therefore, the Office of Governance sought and received the support of Cabinet to bring awareness and/or reinstate much needed management tools in the Public Service as follows.

1. Re-instate formal Strategic Planning in the Public Service—to achieve a successful Performance Management Appraisal System (PMAS). A Circular bringing awareness was disseminated by the Office of Governance in November 2006.

2. Re-instate and/or strengthen Management Teams in Ministries, with the additional role of monitoring of the PMAS—The Public Service Commission’s **delegation of its powers** to the Chief Executive Officers is subject to the “understanding and undertaking that Management Teams **shall** be established...”. The Management Teams were required to give support to the proper implementation and monitoring of the PMAS within Ministries. A Circular bringing awareness to this was disseminated by the Office of Governance in November 2006.

3. Re-enforcing Annual Reporting—the provision of timely and Annual Reports on the stewardship of Ministries/Department have been dwindling since Belize’s independence in 1981. For purposes of accountability and transparency, each Ministry and Department was required to produce an Annual Report and ensure that these are accessible by stakeholders, commencing with the end of the financial year 2006/2007. A Circular bringing awareness to this effort was disseminated by the Office of Governance in November 2006.

The Office will develop monitoring and evaluation strategies early in the new financial year to monitor compliance to this call for improving the management of the Public Service as is the policy.

6. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF LOCAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

6.1 UNDP/UNICEF Project

Table 1 demonstrates workshop topics by the number of attendees for the UNDP/UNICEF funded programme. Six workshops were conducted totaling **299** participants in the course introduction, and **36** in the three training of trainers sessions. Of this, 149 participated in the Governance Awareness workshops. The variance indicates the difference between the number of participants targeted and those who actually attended.

Table 1
Workshop Topic by Number of Participants

“Capacity Building UNDP/UNICEF Project”

TOPIC	TARGET	ATTENDEES	VARIANCE	TRAINERS
1. Evidence-based Policy Development	25	16	-9	5
2. Strategic Planning	25	29	4	9
3. Results-based Performance Management	30	44	14	22
4. Organizational Review	25	22	-3	--
5. Professional Writing	30	39	9	--
6. Governance Awareness	--	149	--	--

The Organization Review and Evidence-based Policy Development fell short of the targeted number of 25 participants for each topic, while the Results-based Performance Management was over-booked by 14 participants. One of the reasons for the shortage for the Policy Development workshop was a change of commencement date to accommodate the facilitator, and some Ministries and Departments found it difficult to adjust to the changes. Target numbers were not set for the Governance Awareness Tours, primarily due to the innovativeness of the content and approach. The Office was advised that similar participation at the District level and the time of the day would attract an average of 20 participants. Therefore an average of 149 attendees to seven workshops would be the standard number. While the Office through this measure is considering the attendance a success, it is also looking at various measures of engagement via the development of a Communication Strategy Framework in the near future.

6.2 Performance Management and Appraisal Training

The data in Tables 2 and 3 represent the first series of intensive training from July 11 to August 3, 2006 on the new Performance Management and Appraisal System (PMAS). Some 404 Officers participated in the first three weeks of training, which is a clear indication that a large number of Officers are yet to participate. This data, while not generalizing on the Public Service, is reflective of the trend throughout the training period on the PMAS.

Table 2
Staff Classification by District

CLASSIFICATION	DISTRICTS							TOTAL
	Czl	O/W	Bze	Bmp	Cyo	S/C	Tol	
Heads of Dept.			15	1				16
Professional	4	5	5	6	6	3	7	36
Technical	4	7	9	12	9	7	5	53
Administrative Officers			2	4			2	8
Finance Officers			5	6			1	12
Sr. Managers	2	2	11	14		3		32
Support Staff	13	20	100	71	13	11	19	247
Total	23	34	147	114	28	24	34	404

Table 2 demonstrates that Administrative and Finance Officers were practically absent from the training sessions. Some 8 Administrative Officers representing 29% and 12 Finance Officers representing 21% participated, which is approximately one-quarter of the total combined numbers of both categories. Administrative Officers and Finance Officers command some authority over human and financial resources administration in the Public Service, including ensuring performance within the Ministries and Departments. While the participation of senior managers was relatively high, it is the reverse for the Heads of Departments (HODs). Of 53 Department Heads, only 16 or 30% attended. Heads of Departments play a significant role in improving the performance and effectiveness of the Public Service as they are accountable and answerable for large a number of personnel.

The number of participants by the district where training was provided is represented in Table 3. It paints an overview of the culture of response as well as the level of participation by the District. Participation by Public Officers from the City of Belmopan shows a very low turn-out relative to all other areas of the country. Also on average, Belmopan has the largest percentage of walk-ins or unregistered participants, ranging from 23% to 77%.

Table 3
Participants by District

DISTRICT	REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS		UNREGISTERED PARTICIPANTS		ATTENDANCE				TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	Present		Absent		
					#	%	#	%	
Training of Trainers	23	71.3	8	28.7	25	77.5	6	22.5	31
Corozal	17	68	8	32	23	92	2	8	25
Toledo	28	71.2	11	28.2	34	87.1	5	12.9	39
Orange Walk	26	66.7	13	33.3	34	87.1	5	12.9b	39
Stann Creek	24	100	nil	nil	24	100	nil	nil	24
Cayo	31	77.5	9	22.5	28	70	12	30	40
Belize City	32	68.1	15	31.9	38	80.9	9	19.1	47
Belize City	33	100	n/a		33		n/a		33
Belmopan	21	61.4	17	38.6	36	81.8	2	18.2	38
Belmopan	26	76.4	8	23.6	23	67.6	11	32.4	34
Belmopan	40	78.4	11	27.4	30	58.8	21	41.2	51
Belize City	42	100	nil	n/a	27	64.3	15	35.7	42
Belize City	42	85.7	7	14.3	28	57.1	21	42.9	49
Belize City	40	80	10	20	21	42	29	58	50
TOTAL	425	78.4	117	21.6	404	74.5	138	25.5	542

With the exception of Dangriga and one session in Belize City where 100% of registered participants were present, invariably only an average of 71% of registered participants attended. The “no shows” and “walk-ins” are major concerns for planning, as these eventually result in wastage and the possible blocking or omission of potential, deserving candidates. A total of 25 senior officers were trained as trainers, but only seven volunteered to conduct training in the PMAS. However, only four of the seven trained trainers facilitated the sessions due to prior commitments of the other three persons. Several reasons were given for not volunteering, including:

- Too much work
- Not enough time
- Do not feel confident

The Office of Governance has since ascertained that volunteering to train is yet not accepted as a norm for continuity, and would need to further engage Public Officers and encourage leaders into that direction. Hence the acceptable target number for training of trainers was reduced to a low of twelve and a high of fifteen for other projects in this financial year.

6.3 Capacity Building

Training activity by year and month is reflected in Table 4. This table shows the extent to which the Office of Governance concentrated on skills development during the entire financial year of 2006/2007. From the commencement of the financial year in April 2006 to the end of the calendar year in December 2006, each month, with the exception of October, was occupied with the organization and conduct of at least one workshop; August being the busiest month with five workshops. The continuation of the financial year in January 2007, which ended in March 2007 shows February as a very involved month in the organization of four different training events.

Table 4
Training Activity by Year and Month

2006	Training Activity	2007	Training Activity
April	1. Organization Review	January	1. Governance Awareness 2. Strategic Planning
May	1. Organization Review 2. Results-based Performance Management 3. E-government Awareness	February	1. Results-based Performance Management 2. Governance Awareness 3. Consultation on National ICT Policy 4. Customer Service
June	1. Strategic Planning	March	1. E-Government Policy
July	1. Organization Review 2. Performance Management Appraisal System		
August	1. Policy Development 2. E-Learning, E-Business & Web Design 3. Performance Management Appraisal System		
September	1. Performance Management Appraisal Systems 2. E-Learning and E-Business		
October			
November	1. Organization Review 2. Performance Management Appraisal System		
December	1. Policy Development		

The Office directly touched **1,726** persons in skills development efforts as indicated in Table 5. Im-mense emphasis was placed on Organization Review as a skill that is greatly needed in the Public Service, with four sessions (Table 5). However, the practical component of developing a report of findings and recommendations has impeded the completion of the projects. One project which is a review of the National Fire Service was cancelled, while for two others, Income Tax and Labour Departments, the group members are still in the process of developing the reports.

Table 5
Workshop Topic by Date of Occurrence & No. of Participants

NO.	WORKSHOP TOPIC	DATE	No. of Participants
1	Evidence-based Policy Development	Aug. 7 - 10, 2006 Dec. 4 - 6, 2006	28 16
	Training of Trainers	Dec. 7 - 8, 2006	09
2	Strategic Planning	June 19 - 22, 2006 Jan. 22 - 24, 2007	32 29
	Training of Trainers	Jan. 25 - 26, 2007	05
3	Organization Review	April 3 - 5, 2006	08
		May 1 - 3, 2006	08
		July 5 - 7, 2006	10
		Nov. 13 - 18, 2006	22
4	Results-based Performance Mgmt.	May 29 - 31, 2006 Feb. 19 - 21, 2007	22 44
	Training of Trainers	Feb. 22 - 23, 2007	22
5	Professional Writing	November 23, 2007	22
		November 29, 2007	17
6	Induction Training	Nov. 22 & 28, 2006	82
		Dec. 12 & 14, 2006	75
7	Governance Awareness	Jan. 22 - Feb. 1, 2007	149
8	E-Government Awareness	May 16 - 19, 2006	97
9	Customer Service Training of Trainers	Feb. 12 - 14, 2007	66
		Feb 15 - 16, 2007	33
10	National ICT Policy Consultation	Feb. 2, 2007	38
11	E-Learning, E-Business & Web Design	Aug. & Sept., 2006	135
12	Performance Mgmt. & Appraisal System	July to Nov., 2006	700
13	Microsoft Suite	April 10 & 25, 2007	57
	TOTAL		1,726

Due to the financial support of UNDP/UNICEF, some workshops were repeated, resulting in more opportunities for participation. For example, Evidence-based Policy Development which was offered in August was repeated in December, including a training of trainers component for continuity. Similarly, Strategic Planning was also repeated, being offered in June 2006 and January 2007, and also included a training of trainers component.

Lastly, Table 6 demonstrates the responses by all Ministries and Departments to the call for soft skills development for middle and senior level Public Officers. A total of **51** GOB Agencies participated, representing **all** Government of Belize's Ministries. The number also includes individuals from partner organizations, such as, the University of Belize (UB), the National Assembly, Youth For the Future, National 4-H and the Military. Some 50% of all the Agencies listed participated in three or more of the six skills development workshops.

Place Table 6
Agency by Workshop Topic

No.	Ministry/Department	EPD	OR	PW	SP	PM	CS	Total Workshops
1	Audit Department	*	*	*	-	*	*	5
2	Belize Defence Force	*	*	*	*	*	*	6
3	Human Development	*	*	-	*	*	*	5
4	Cooperatives	*	*	*	-	-	-	3
5	Customs & Excise	*	*	-	-	*	*	4
6	Health	*	-	-	-	*	-	2
7	Labour	*	*	*	*	*	-	5
8	Police	*	-	-	*	*	*	4
9	Transport	*	*	-	*	*	*	5
10	Accountant General	*	-	*	*	*	-	4
11	General Registry	*	-	-	-	-	*	2
12	KHMH	*	*	-	*	*	*	4
13	National Assembly	*	-	-	*	*	-	3
14	National Fire Service	-	*	-	*	*	-	3
15	Immigration & Nationality	-	*	-	*	*	*	4
16	Income Tax	-	*	-	-	*	*	3
17	Office of Governance	*	*	-	*	*	*	4
18	Office of Services Com.	-	*	-	*	*	-	3
19	Office of the Ombudsman	-	*	-	-	-	-	1
20	Works	-	*	*	*	*	-	4
21	Education	-	*	*	*	*	-	4
22	Fisheries	-	*	*	-	*	-	3
23	General Post Office	-	*	-	*	-	*	3

Place Table 6 *cont'd*
Agency by Workshop Topic

No.	Ministry/Department	EPD	OR	PW	SP	PM	CS	Total Workshops
24	Natural Resources	-	*	-	-	*	*	3
25	Agriculture	-	-	*	*	*	*	4
26	Environment	*	-	*	*	*	-	4
27	Foreign Affairs	-	-	*	-	-	-	1
28	Foreign Trade	-	-	*	-	-	-	1
29	General Sales Tax	-	-	*	*	*	*	4
30	Local Government	-	-	*	-	-	-	1
31	Belize Coast Guard	-	-	-	*	*	-	2
32	Youth for the Future	*	-	-	*	-	-	2
33	Human Services	*	-	-	-	*	*	3
34	Housing	-	-	-	*	-	-	1
35	Lands	-	-	-	*	*	-	2
36	NEMO	-	-	-	*	-	-	1
37	Office of Prime Minister	-	-	-	*	*	-	2
38	University of Belize	-	-	-	*	-	-	1
39	Archives	-	-	-	*	-	*	2
40	Community Rehabilitation	-	-	-	*	*	-	2
41	Forestry	*	-	-	*	-	-	2
42	National Development	*	-	-	*	*	-	3
43	Library Service	-	-	-	*	*	-	2
44	Women's	-	-	-	*	-	*	2
45	Finance	-	-	-	-	*	-	1
46	Elections & Boundaries	-	-	-	-	*	*	2
47	ITVET	-	-	-	-	*	-	1
48	National Forensic Services	-	-	-	-	*	-	1
49	BAHA	-	-	-	-	-	*	1
50	Civil Aviation	-	-	-	-	-	*	1
51	Supreme Court	-	-	-	-	-	*	1

Both the Belize Defence Force (BDF) and the Ministry of Human Development were each recognized with a certificate of participation at a Certificate Award Ceremony held at the Radisson Fort George on March 28, 2007. The Belize Defence Force was awarded for participating in all 6 capacity building workshops; and the Ministry of Human Development not only for the number of workshops, but also for the participation of senior Officers including **all** Heads of Departments (HODs) and the Chief Executive Officer. This was the only Ministry to be so recognized.

The wide participation of a cross-section of Ministries and Departments and the high level or category of Public Officers attending, is an advantage to the immediate implementation of the newly acquired

or improved skills across the Public Service. Also the trained Officers, while not in large numbers, is an adequate number to sustain the development of skills within the Public Service in the near future.

7. PUBLIC EXTENSION & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

7.1 Presentations

The following is a list of some twenty one (21) presentations by the Office of Governance. As a part of its outreach to the wider community, the list shows that the Office participated in at least one activity every month, with the exception of the month of May.

1. **April 11, 2006**—Presentation of Strategic Plan to the Minister for the Public Service along with the Cabinet Secretary, Financial Secretary, Chief Executive Officers and members of the Oversight Bodies
2. **June 13, 2006**—UWI regional consultation, presented on behalf of the Belize Public Service
3. **June 17, 2006**—Keynote speaker at the Annual General Meeting of the Public Service Union at Machaca, Toledo District
4. **June 23, 2006**—Welcome address, celebration of Public Service Day
5. **July 23, 2006**—Participated in the closing ceremonies of the “Financial Management” workshop sponsored by the Commonwealth secretariat for the CARICOM region, in Belize City
6. **August 9, 2006**—Presentation on “Public Service Management” to management students of School of Continuing Studies, UWI, in Belize City
7. **August 9, 2006**—One-on-one meetings *in situ* with leaders impacting ICT and E-government, namely, Belize Telecommunication Ltd., Belize Tourist Board, Public Utilities Commission, and Chamber of Commerce
8. **September 7, 2006**—Presentation to Senior Staff of Ministry of Health on Good Governance Principles, in Belmopan

9. **September 18, 2006**—Presentation on Good governance Principles to the senior staff members of PACT
10. **October 11, 2006**—Presentation on Good Governance principles to members of the National Council on Education
11. **November 10, 2006**—”A Discussion on Migration”, Anthropology Class at Galen University, Cayo District
13. **November 15, 2006**—”Evolution of a People: Caribness to Garifunadou”, Guest presentation at the Michigan Partners conference, in Belize City
14. **November 17, 2006**—Meeting of partners organized by UNICEF, made presentation on Capacity Building Project
15. **November 22, 2006**—Welcome Address at the launch of the Website Portal
16. **December 21, 2006**—Presentation at the Swear-in ceremony for the Acting Chief Elections Officer
17. **January 28, 2007**—Keynote speaker at the Annual General Meeting for Justice of Peace and Commissioners of the Supreme Court, in Belize City
18. **February 27, 2007**—Presentation to Belize Police Department, Civilians on “Governance and Service”, in Belmopan
19. **March 1, 2007**—”Governance and Records Management”, presentation at a workshop organized and sponsored by the Belize Archives and Records service, in Belmopan
20. **March 22, 2007**—Presentation to Belize Police Department, Senior Command on “Governance and Service”, in Belmopan
21. **March 28, 2007**—Welcome address at Certificate Award Ceremony for Public Officers

7.2 Research and Analysis

1. Delegation of Powers —

The Office of Governance conducted a study on the use of the “Directions in Writing” by Managers. The “Directions in Writing” delegated powers to Chief Executive Officers by the Public Service Commission to administrate permanently established personnel from pay scale 1 to 8. This in itself is a modernization effort which came into effect in 2002. The findings resulted in awareness to the weaknesses and the strengths in the initiative. Efforts are being made to streamline the response to reporting by Managers to the Public Services Commission. It is one of the conditions of the Directions in Writing to which Chief Executive Officers were not responding.

2. Public Service Management Laws of CARICOM and Commonwealth Countries—

Researched and reviewed through networking, laws from various Commonwealth countries including the CARICOM countries that are relevant to the objectives for the Public Service Management Bill for Belize.

3. Secretarial Duties to three Advisory Bodies—

Prepared minutes of meetings and other secretarial and clerical duties for all the Advisory Bodies.

7.3 CARICAD Board Meeting 2006

Belize is a member of the Executive Board of CARICAD, and was represented by the Office of Governance at its 25th Annual General Meeting held in Tortola, British Virgin Islands on July 24, 2007. Among the items on the agenda, was the ratification of its budget and Operational Plan for the new financial year. A schedule to the year 2010 for chairing and hosting the Board’s meetings on a rotation basis was also developed. Belize is slated to chair and host the Annual Board meeting in 2008 and will be a member of the Management Sub-committee, effective 2007 for two years.

7.4 Other Participation

1. November 28, 2006—Met with consultants from DFID
2. December 6, 2006—Attended and participated in the presentation by Professor Neville Duncan on Governance, organized by the Council of Churches in Belize City

3. Organized and chaired two Inter-Ministerial Meetings on June 9 and October 20, 2006
4. Participated in three Official Side, Joint Staff Relations Council working meetings
5. March 28, 2007—Organized the Certificate Award Ceremony to award over 300 Public Officers who participated in the “Capacity Building” project. The venue was Radisson Fort George in Belize City and the guest speaker was Dr. Cletus Bertin.

8. CONCLUSION

The Office of Governance defines Governance as the **competent** management of resources (financial and human) and business in a manner that is transparent, accountable, and responsive. There are several qualities or principles of good governance in a sound governance system, and the Office of Governance identified and has focused on four, namely, Accountability, Transparency, Inclusiveness and Justice.

Good governance provides the enabling, efficient, orderly and transparent environment for development. In public management it is viewed as an “aspect of the new paradigm on public administration, which emphasizes the role of public managers in providing high quality services that citizens value and demand. The Public Service plays a vital role, in providing quality public services to all Belizeans—service delivery that is relevant, affordable and effective. As such, the services must be delivered by Public Officers who are responsive, efficient and professional.

Hence the importance of investing in the human capital, as one of the most critical paths to maintaining good governance practices. Human capital development is an on-going process of employing various strategies in people development. The Office of Governance as the leading catalyst for change, and as the agency responsible for capacity building has concluded its first year of activities aimed at upgrading soft skills and addressing competency gaps. Along with continuously investing in people, is the promotion of governance awareness, the call for transparency and accountability through strategic planning and annual reporting, and information dissemination via the GOB Website Portal.

At Independence 1981, the Public Service of the newly independent Belize continued to be governed primarily by administrative directives called the General Orders, until sixteen years later. 1997

saw the first regulation pertaining to the human resource administration and conditions of service, for those permanent established personnel only. Twenty-five years after the attainment of independence, Belize is more transparent, well connected, and the philosophies and performance of government organizations are more scrutinized by the media and the general public as never before. At the same time the Belize Public Service is still operating with a distinct body of rules and regulations which has a limited view of human resource administration, and which does not address the roles and responsibilities of managers and procedures for management.

Setting standards in the Public Service and the establishment of mechanisms to ensure good governance practices were called for separately by the Council on Good Governance and Public Sector Modernization and the Joint Staff Relations Council. Both organizations have recommended and developed a legal framework for management, so as to ensure delivery on the promise of better government—better managerial accountability, through regulatory reform. Internally, the outcome will be a well defined management structure for devolving responsibility and accountability. Externally the outcome will effect a more conducive environment for business due to greater openness and transparency. A draft bill for a legal framework for the effective management and leadership of the Public Service called the Public Service Management Bill is in circulation for scrutiny, and recommendations for improvement by members and others. It is a Bill for an Act to define the powers, functions and responsibilities of agencies of the Government of Belize, and to provide for the recognition of various categories of workers within the Public Service. The draft Bill in itself is a substantial accomplishment for this financial year and its passage into law when completed will be far reaching.

If success was to be measured by numbers alone, the Office of Governance can embrace success in the financial year 2006/2007. However, the success of this financial year's endeavours will be its long term impact on the various government agencies. It is therefore dependent on top management's support in fostering the implementation of the training content in the day to day work. On the other hand, it is also incumbent on the trainees to be proactive to ensure that the skills developed are utilized, maintained and made sustainable.